

**Amendments to the Specification:**

At page 2, lines 12-18 (please refer to replacement page 2, filed with the Amendment dated March 3, 2003), please replace that paragraph with the following amended paragraph:

One aspect of the invention is It is known to cover this metallic sheath with a wrapping which, being combustible without leaving any harmful residues, momentarily retards the propagation of heat to the core of the cored wire. This combustible wrapping is wound in a helix around the metallic sheath. Unfortunately, the paper wrapping is sometimes observed to deteriorate during handling, i.e., when the wire is wound around the reel or when the wire placed on the reel is unwound in order to be introduced into the bath.

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